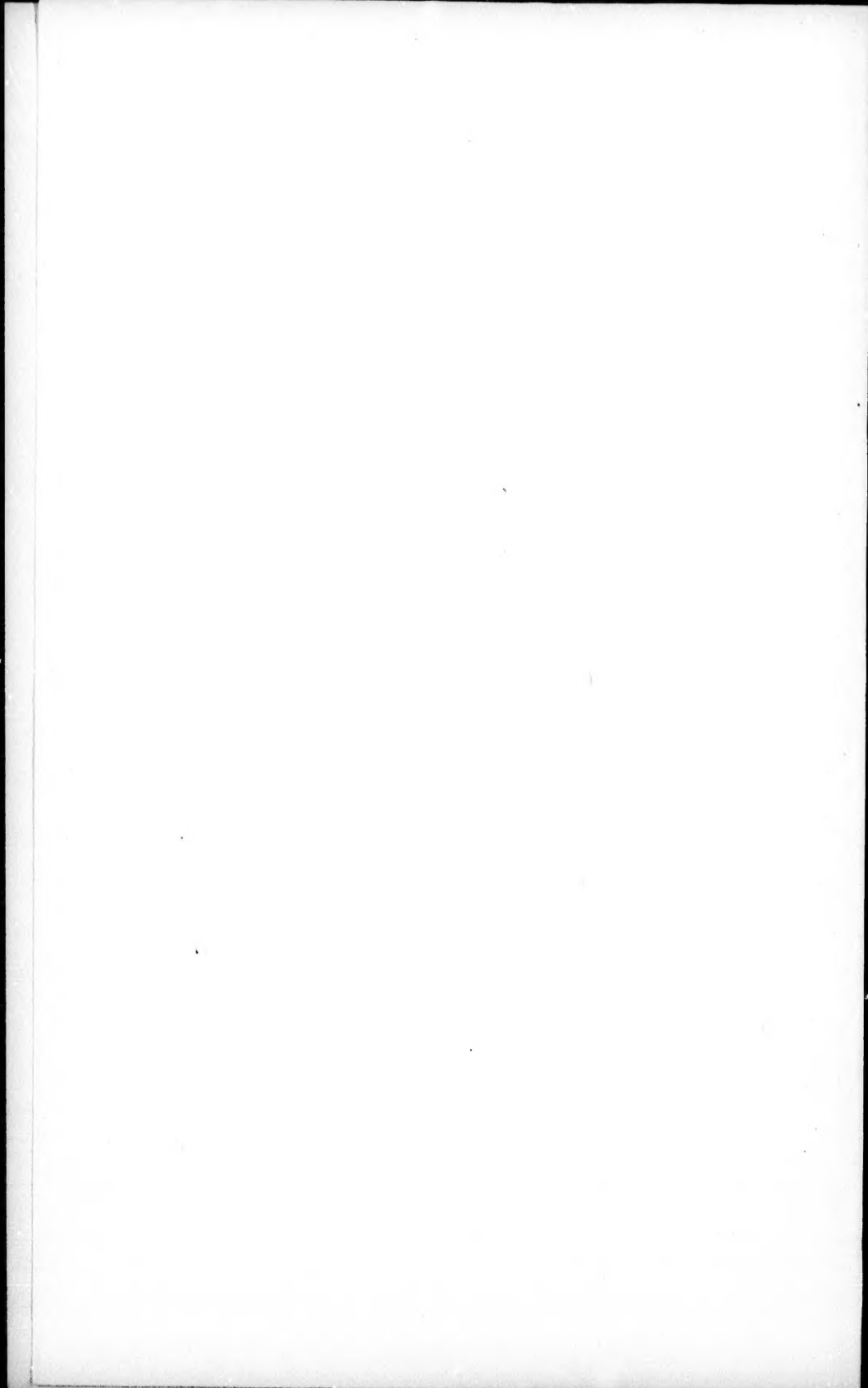




A LETTER

TO

THE REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D.

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,

The reader is requested to correct the following Errata, which occurred in transcribing the manuscript.

Page 3, line 6, erase the words "at Markinch."

12, line 3, for "raises" read *rouses*.

13, line 4 from bottom, for "eight" read *eighteen*.

17, line 5, for "*in* efficiently" read *and* efficiently.

21, line 18, for "*their* leading truths" read *these* leading truths.

40, line 9, after "September" insert 1825.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY SWORDS, STANFORD, AND CO.

No. 152 Broadway.

1832.

A LETTER

TO

10

THE REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D.

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

THE RIGHT REVEREND DR. HOBART,

BISHOP OF NEW-YORK, NORTH-AMERICA.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY SWORDS, STANFORD, AND CO.

No. 152 Broadway.

1832.

09.

NEW-YORK :
PRINTED BY EDWARD J. SWORDS,
No. 8 Thamez-street.

A LETTER

TO

THE REV. THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D.

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN the death of Dr. Andrew Thomson, Edinburgh has lost a powerful and eloquent preacher, and the Church of Scotland a zealous, bold, and uncompromising defender. He was near my own age; but as he studied at Edinburgh, and I at St. Andrew's, our acquaintance was slight. Once visiting at his father's house ~~at Markinch~~, in the summer of 1799, I found him playing on the violin. The conversation turned on music, on which he spoke with great warmth, I may rather say, with enthusiasm. Soon after I left Scotland, and never saw him more. But Dr. Thomson was too much in the public eye to be overlooked or forgotten; and I have often admired his firmness and intrepidity of character, when I could not sympathize in the cause for which he was contending.

If your Church has great reason to lament the loss of one of her most sturdy pillars, still greater cause has the Episcopal Church of the United States to mourn the premature departure of Bishop Hobart, whose eminent services have mainly contributed to her present extensive and flourishing condition. Many years have passed away

since I had the happiness of becoming acquainted with this highly gifted prelate. The learned and amiable Dr. Bowden, a name that will ever be dear to the friends of true religion and the rising Protestant Church of North-America, brought us together during a short excursion which I made to New-York in February, 1816; and whether from a similarity of disposition and kindred minds, or some other cause, I know not, but we were intimate friends from the first moment. I loved the frankness, the warmth and energy of his character, and recognised at once those sterling qualities which so eminently fitted him for the discharge of the weighty duties of his exalted station.

The life of Dr. Hobart is identified with the history of the Church of which he was so distinguished an ornament; and as my sketch will introduce you to one of the most curious and interesting portions of the annals of Christianity, you will not be displeased at the length of this letter, nor at the decided preference which I give to *my Church*—and her institutions, as it is not greater than you are in the habit of manifesting for your own.

In the British-American settlements, before the revolution, no attention whatever was paid by the imperial government to the religious instruction of the colonists: in this matter they were left entirely to themselves; and of all denominations, the Church of England was, from the nature of its government, the most destitute, and laboured under the most serious difficulties; they were indeed so great, that, had not the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts taken pity upon her members, and sent them missionaries, an episcopal clergyman would have been hardly found in British North-America at the æra of the revolution. The Plantations, as the colonies were then called, were considered

a part of the spiritual charge of the Bishop of London, but no prelate of the Church had ever beheld them. The clergy and parishes were without superintendence; the churches and burial grounds remained unconsecrated; the children were without confirmation; and every candidate for the ministry was under the necessity of going to Europe for ordination—a voyage so dangerous, from the imperfect state of navigation at that period, that no less than one-fifth of the young men who aspired to serve the Lord in the sanctuary, perished in the ocean. Placed in circumstances so melancholy, is it to be wondered that, after the declaration of independence and the separation of the two countries, the members of the Church of England were few in number, and many of the congregations destitute of clergymen? These events, so grateful to the United States in a political point of view, brought to Episcopalians a fresh subject of regret; for the Society in England, by whose munificence their clergymen had been supported, was induced, from change of circumstances, to transfer its assistance to the colonies which still continued to be faithfully attached to the British crown.

In September, 1775, while the Church continued in this state of depression, and when civil dissensions began to assume a serious aspect, John Henry Hobart was born at Philadelphia. From his earliest years he took a strong interest in religion, and though the Church could offer no allurements to the sanguine and ambitious, he determined to devote talents which might have raised him to the highest rank in any profession, to the preaching of the Gospel. While preparing for holy orders, he was in constant communication with Bishop White, the venerable father of the Church—a prelate worthy of the apostolic age. Much have I desired to see this meek, wise, and

holy servant of God, the ancient friend of my spiritual father, Dr. Stuart, of Kingston; and I still hope to enjoy this privilege, before we are removed from this sublunary habitation.

In 1798, Mr. Hobart was admitted into holy orders; and, even then, the Episcopal Church seemed hardly to have gained any ground; she was scarcely known out of the great towns on the sea-coast, and could only number ninety clergymen north of Maryland, of which seventeen belonged to Pennsylvania, and twenty to the state of New-York. After a probation of two years in different country parishes, where he is still held in affectionate remembrance, the vestry of Trinity Church, New-York, hearing of his great abilities, invited him to become one of their assistant clergymen. Mr. Hobart was in his twenty-sixth year when this flattering offer was made; the parish was the most ancient and populous in America, and opened a field of usefulness in a great degree commensurate with his expanding talents. In his letter to the vestry he says—"The best evidence that I can give of my feelings will be, to act in all cases with fidelity and independence, governed only by a sincere regard to the sacred dictates of conscience and duty. The station would require the judgment and experience of more advanced years. I shall therefore have a peculiar claim on the friendship and counsel of the vestry, on the candour and support of the congregation, and on the affectionate advice and aid of my superiors and brethren in the ministry. Thus strengthened and supported, while I endeavour faithfully to discharge my duty, I trust that I may hope for the presence and blessing of Almighty God."

Though young when he came to New-York, his maturity of understanding, soundness of judgment, and

masculine sense, enabled him to discharge, with increasing advantage to the Church, the arduous duties which the station imposed; and his elder colleagues, to their lasting honour, acknowledged him, from the first, to be more than equal, in every thing that required commanding intellect or talents for business. The parish being very large and populous, his labours were incessant; but it was his life to promote the spiritual and moral welfare of every individual under his care; and it seemed that the more he multiplied his duties, in attending to the wants of the poor, in visiting the sick, in preparing for the stated services of the Church, the less heavy did they sit upon him. There was a diligence, an ardour, an elasticity of mind, a devotion to his profession, a gratification in doing good, which kept him always fresh and vigorous. Indeed, his whole conduct proved most clearly his readiness to spend and to be spent, that he might promote the glory of God in the spiritual edification of his children, and gave an efficacy to his parochial ministrations which has seldom been surpassed; and although they were somewhat obscured by the splendour of his Episcopacy, they never were remitted, or failed to produce the most precious and abundant fruit.

Of his services in the sanctuary I am little competent to speak, having only heard him two or three times; yet, even from these, I can easily conceive why he should have become so dear to his people. I felt the eloquent ardour with which he poured out to his listening audience the truths of eternal life, and the vigour of that mind which enabled him to wield with so great effect the wisdom of the divine word, and to command assent, even when he failed to produce permanent conviction. It was impossible to hear him without becoming sensible of the infinite importance of the Gospel. He warned coun-

seduced, entreated, and comforted, with intense and powerful energy. His manner and voice struck you with the deep interest which pervaded his soul for their salvation, and found ready entrance into their hearts.

He appeared in the pulpit as a father anxious for the eternal happiness of his children—a man of God preparing them for their Christian warfare—a herald from the other world, standing between the living and the dead, between heaven and earth, entreating perishing sinners, in the most tender accents, not to reject the message of reconciliation which the Son of the living God so graciously offered for their acceptance.

Not only was he careful that his doctrine should be sound and scriptural, but that the proportion maintained between its various parts should coincide as far as possible with the inspired models; that each Christian principle should occupy its proper place, and the whole counsel of God be unfolded, so that no one part of revealed truth should be presented with a frequency and pre-eminence which might cast any other in the shade. To perfect the man of God, he placed the Gospel before his congregation in its twofold aspect, as it is calculated to inspire some with confidence and joy, and others with vigilance and fear. His preaching was that of the Apostles: he taught that purity of life was inseparable from true faith, and that the Christian duties derive all their force and authority from a personal reliance of the heart and soul on the efficacy of the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God. His power as a preacher was not only perceived, but felt. The precise and minute adaptation of his ministrations to the state of his hearers, the ease with which he entered into the diversified workings of their hearts, and the knowledge which he displayed of their thoughts and practice, could only be exhibited by one who possessed

something of an intuitive, yet profound discernment of human nature, added to an extensive and discriminating observation of human conduct, in every varied situation of common life.

There was not only a feebleness, but something of a deadness in the Church, when Mr. Hobart commenced his ministry in New-York. The retiring timidity of her leading members, however amiable, and the very infirm health of Bishops Provoost and Moore, encouraged the chiefs of another Christian denomination, ever the determined opponents of the Episcopal Church, to attack her with more than their usual violence. But a defender had arisen whom they knew not of. Dr. Hobart, unfurling the banner of evangelical truth and apostolical order, marched with fearless intrepidity to the front of the battle, and put the enemy to flight. Thousands were astonished to find that the claims of the Protestant Episcopal Church, both in purity and government, could be so firmly established, and that she was so strongly entitled to the character of primitive and apostolic. Not satisfied with defeating her enemies, and proving that her foundation was the Apostles themselves, Dr. Hobart continued to enlighten the public mind in her forms and liturgy, in a series of works, no fewer than six in number, published between 1804 and 1811. The consequence of these publications, and other able works on the same subjects, which have since followed from different writers, has been, that a more general and correct knowledge now exists among the people of our communion in the United States, respecting the government of the Church, the beauty and excellence of her forms, the purity of her principles, and the spirituality of her devotions, than even in England; and all this chiefly owing to Dr. Hobart's judicious and powerful labours while yet a presbyter.

The appointment of Dr. Hobart, at this seasonable period, to the conspicuous station of minister of the most prominent parish in North-America, has always appeared to me a special gift of Divine Providence towards the furtherance of the true Church. Completely master of her primitive usages and principles, he applied them with a readiness and perspicuity to the questions in agitation, that astonished the religious readers of all denominations, most of whom were totally ignorant of the sacred claims of Episcopacy, and disposed to consider the forms of church government and apostolic order matters of inferior importance. Instead of reposing any longer on loose opinions, taken up without examination in these matters, people were roused to their consideration by his cogent reasons, apt illustrations, and powerful appeals to ecclesiastical history, which proved, beyond controversy, that the government of the Church, the orders of the ministry, and their regular succession from the Apostles, were not questions of slight moment, or to be treated safely either with silence or contempt. Dr. Hobart seemed to bring strange things to their ears; there was a novelty in his arguments which bewildered those who were ignorant of the history of the first ages of Christianity, and many found it as difficult to divest themselves of their unreasonable prejudices against Episcopacy, as the heathens their propensity to idolatry, on the first preaching of the Apostles.

Truth is never sown without fruit; and the claims of the Church to a near affinity with that of the Apostles, soon began to be acknowledged by numbers who had been hitherto her enemies. Many admitted, with true Christian candour, their total ignorance of such matters till thus forcibly brought before them; and that never having seen till now the three orders of the ministry,

Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, conducting the government and worship of the Church, they were not aware of its superior excellence. Even those who still adhered to modern innovations in the government and ministry of their churches, were compelled to treat with respect the claims of Episcopacy to primitive purity and order, and no longer to hold them up as novelties, or inconsistent with the principles of the Gospel.

In all discussions in which he was engaged relating to the constitution and discipline of the Church, there was an earnestness and uprightness of proceeding which commanded universal esteem. Among his own people he was considered a sure interpreter of the laws and polity of the Christian Church. Even when most animated amidst the conflict of debate, he was found always standing upon Gospel principles, and sternly opposed to any thing like artifice or manœuvre. In controversy, whether oral or from the press, he came directly to the point, disdaining all sophistry or quibbling, as unworthy of the cause: these were arts so repugnant to his high feelings, that he could not have used them had they been laid before him. He therefore gave full weight to the arguments of his opponents, placed them in their strongest point of view, and sought not to misstate or evade them; much less did he descend to any thing personal; this the natural dignity of his mind would never permit him to employ. He depended entirely upon his honesty of purpose, his knowledge of facts, and ready application of principle; and, whether from the press or pulpit, or his more private ministrations, all his exertions were united and harmonized into one predominating, overpowering object, the increase and prosperity of the Church; and in this light only can his character be accurately appreciated.

It has been often said, that the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church; and the same may be said of controversy, which elicits truth, and ~~raises~~^{awakes} men from their slumbers to the contemplation of the most important subjects, subjects which they may have long forgotten or disregarded. To those who were intimately acquainted with Dr. Hobart, my dwelling upon his controversy with Dr. Mason, on the subjects of primitive truth and order, will be easily excused, as the whole tenour of his future policy, and I will add, that of the Church, turned upon its success; for from his first work on the subject we may date the rapid increase of the Episcopal communion in the United States.

As no prelate of the Church of England had ever been sent to the colonies up to the period of the revolution, no Episcopal act had ever been performed on this side of the Atlantic. But now that the connexion with Great-Britain was dissolved, it became necessary to provide for the continuance of the Church by a regular succession of Bishops. Accordingly Dr. Seabury was sent to England, to be raised to the Episcopate; but so many difficulties intervened, that he was obliged to repair to Scotland, and was consecrated by the Episcopal communion in that country, in 1784. Soon after, the difficulties which stood in the way of Dr. Seabury's consecration were removed by an Act of the British Parliament, and Dr. Provoost and Dr. White were consecrated at Lambeth, in 1787.

The arrival of three Bishops was a new æra in the Church, and the cause of much joy to her friends; but as a very few years had yet elapsed since the return of peace, she might even at this time be said to be scarcely known. During the war, most of her clergy, then missionaries from the Society for Propagating the Gospel in

Foreign Parts, had fled to England or the other colonies, and their flocks were scattered; and we need not therefore be much surprised to find that the principles of the first Protestant Church in the world were in a great measure unknown in the United States, and that the church government which accorded with the first and purest ages of the Gospel, was deemed quite a novelty, without the sanction of antiquity or precedent. The people, accustomed only to the Presbyterian or Congregational form of government and discipline, and naturally prone to equality, were little disposed to encourage a denomination which was said to give too much power to Bishops, and to be unfavourable to republican institutions. The public mind, poisoned by ten thousand calumnies against prelacy and forms of prayer, was to be cleansed and truly informed, before it was possible for the Church to increase. For some time the enemies of Episcopacy, sensible of their advantage, remained silent on the subject of church government and order. Finding the first Bishops humble men, of retiring habits, though conscientious in the quiet and unobtrusive discharge of their duties, they did not consider it prudent to attack what they affected to represent, and what thousands of their followers believed to be a new denomination. To have persevered in this policy would have been their wisdom; but the dignified aspect in which the Protestant Church was now seen, with its Bishops multiplying in number, and the respect which naturally attaches to that highly spiritual office, gradually produced an accumulation of envy, which could be no longer restrained within bounds, and burst forth in 1805, or eight years after the arrival of the Bishops, in a most violent attack upon the Church.

The moment was propitious to our Zion. Her master

spirit, yet little known, suddenly appeared, and wielded the weapons of controversy with such effect, as to discomfit her assailants. Not satisfied with mere defence, he stormed the enemy's camp, and proved, to the satisfaction of every well-conditioned and unprejudiced mind, that no church government but that of Episcopacy was known during the first fifteen centuries of the Christian æra. This controversy has continued ever since to arrest, from time to time, the public attention, and always to the manifest advantage of primitive order. The Americans are an acute and inquiring people, and the discussions on church government and the forms of prayer have awakened, in the minds of many, recollections of what their fathers had been. On others, who had their denomination to choose, the information drawn out by these debates came as a stream of benignant light, and a feeling in favour of the good old ways was widely engendered. This being the case, it only required an active superintendence and a commanding mind to reap the most abundant harvest. This requisition Dr. Hobart most amply satisfied: he laid the foundation, as a presbyter, of that success which crowned his Episcopate, and which has placed the Church upon the vantage ground. That I am fully justified in this observation, the remarks already made sufficiently prove; but we have, in addition, the extraordinary fact, that in 1798, when he was ordained, New-York state contained but twenty Episcopal clergymen; and in 1811, when he was raised to the mitre, only twenty-three; giving, in thirteen years, a miserable increase of three; while, during the following nineteen years of his Episcopate, the increase was one hundred and eleven.

On his advancement to the Episcopate, the force and elevation of his character, entirely free from all envy and

meanness, placed him, by common consent, at the head of the bench. His brethren knew, from experience, the truth and accuracy of his judgment and devotion to the prosperity of the Church, and leaned with confidence on his clear views and singular firmness: and well they might, for Bishop Hobart reflected deeply, and examined cautiously, before coming to a decision; but having once formed his opinion, he was resolute in maintaining it. This rendered him steady and uniform in all his proceedings. But although fixed in all questions of importance, on which he had been at pains to inform himself, on matters not involving truth and principle he was gentle and accommodating, and won the esteem and affection of his associates by the most kind and delicate deference to their sentiments and feelings. He was neither vain nor obtrusive; but at all times, when the occasion required, prompt in action and expression—sometimes vehement, and occasionally in danger of transport, but always ready, with a manly and affable frankness, to make every concession for the warmth of the moment. With a full determination to maintain what he believed to be true, and keenly interested in the success of every discussion in which he engaged, he seldom offended his adversaries; for it was to the subject, and not to the man, that he addressed himself; and while he handled the weapons of controversy with overwhelming force, he manifested an utter abhorrence of calumny and slander. We felt it natural to give way to Dr. Hobart; nor, in doing so, did any one perceive his own importance lessened; for the Bishop was formed to exercise an ascendancy over those with whom he associated, without ever appearing desirous of acquiring it. In yielding to him, it seemed as if we were giving away nothing, but only falling into the ranks of our leader. When, there-

fore, he departed from this scene of his activity, and the lamentation was without parallel, his brethren felt, and still feel it no disparagement to have it said that the greatest of them all is no more.

On becoming Bishop of New-York, a country nearly as large as England, it appeared, in as far as his Church was concerned, a moral waste. His people were not merely few in number, but intermixed with a great multitude of various denominations, and with many who had no knowledge of religion; and how was he to proceed? He believed that the Church to which he belonged was the one best calculated to diffuse Christianity through the world, and establish it on a permanent foundation; but what was her situation? In his diocese he saw a very few scanty flocks, and, even of these, some without shepherds; single families or individuals scattered through the new settlements; but how were they to be gathered together? He had no shepherds; the Church, in her depressed state, offered no incentives to the young; she had neither rank nor affluence to confer; and he felt that, till he multiplied the clergy, and thus had instruments in his hands, she must remain in her forlorn state. How could he build up the Church of Christ, in her ordinances and faith, without an efficient ministry? He therefore set himself to bring forward young men worthy of the sacred office, to multiply their number, and raise the standard of their attainments. This great and meritorious object called forth his solicitude, and incessant and untiring efforts; and, blessed be God, his anxious perseverance in this good work was at length crowned with success. But, long before the Theological Seminary attained that noble state of efficient prosperity to which it has now arrived, in how many sons of the Church, while pursuing their studies for the ministry,

and after they became preachers, did he take the liveliest interest! How many were indebted to him, not only for direction and advice, but for endeavours the most numerous and incessant, which few, if any, but himself could have made suitably to provide for them, ~~efficiently to~~ promote and advance their success! Through every channel that he could conceive, he sought for them scenes of usefulness, and seconded their views when worthy of support. To how many churches and parishes, not in his own diocese only, but through the whole Union, was he thus the honoured instrument of sending heralds of the Gospel to labour, and to teach, and to watch for the souls of the people, as they who had to give an account unto God! When we consider that this good has been vastly augmented, and placed upon a permanent footing, by his exertions in establishing the Theological Seminary, it will not be easy to calculate the amount of spiritual benefit which has accrued from this portion of his labours to the Church and country. The present generation are enjoying, and future generations will more abundantly reap the benefit; and in eternity, when ministers and people meet before the throne of retribution, the mighty results of the Bishop's efforts in these particulars will be fully disclosed. Here it is refreshing to mention the grateful testimony poured from the affectionate heart of one of the many sons whom he brought forward to the Church, and who has proved himself highly worthy of his protection.* While the candidates for the ministry had no regular instructor, he was their friend and teacher, conversing with them with the freedom of a brother, and endeavouring with parental anxiety to correct their errors and cultivate their good qualities,

* Dr. Berrian in his Sermon on the Death of Bishop Hobart.

and to mould their understandings and dispositions to the conscientious discharge of the duties of the sacred office to which they aspired. He taught them to consider Christianity a rule of life which had come perfect and entire from the hands of its Author; that it admitted of no improvements nor mutilations—not a word is to be added, nor one taken away: it rests upon a foundation not to be moved by the advance of science; for it is already perfect, fixed, and immutable. Nor did he encourage fanciful and speculative views of Christianity; for though it is noble and intellectual, yet its practical influence on the heart and the understanding is the great end which the preacher should have in view in addressing the people. In reading the Scriptures, he maintained the right of private judgment, with a proper deference to the light thrown upon them by able and pious men; but he discouraged fanciful allegories and philosophical theories, from whatever quarter they might come, as leading us away from the simplicity of the Gospel truth, and engendering pride instead of humility. He considered the decent forms and ceremonies retained by our Church, as helps and scaffoldings necessary, in the present state of existence, to prevent too much abstraction, and to remind us that religion is an every-day business, and ought to enter into all our concerns; and while it is equally distant from wild fanaticism and the vagueness of cold philosophy, it inculcates the most precious truths, living and divine—truths which renew, exalt, and strengthen alike our understandings and affections: that it supplies the most powerful motives to assimilate ourselves to the perfections of God, to elevate our souls above the fleeting objects of this world to the real and unseen, and to prefer an heavenly inheritance to all that this life has to bestow. He neither dealt in imaginary

interpretations, nor anathematized human life, nor condemned human nature in terms which revelation does not use; but he pressed conviction home upon the conscience with the severity of truth, rent open the delusions of infidelity, and broke to pieces the vain and hollow pillars of worldly confidence, while he poured the balm of Gospel consolation into the hearts of the weary, the wretched, and the penitent. It is the doctrine of the atonement, he would say, which gives to the Gospel message its true character of joy, and which shall at length reconcile and regenerate the world. This great truth, if preached with acceptance and power, will not fail to increase our congregations, and become a bond of reunion between believers and heaven. The atonement is the cord of true love let down from the upper sanctuary among a sinful race, and it proves to all who take hold of it, the conductor along which the virtues of heaven descend upon them.

Having thus provided for a well educated clergy, he was strenuous in his exhortations, in season and out of season, to urge them to the faithful performance of their duty, in his frequent addresses at the Convention, and in his eloquent charges; and this with a single eye to the glory of their Master, and to the purity of that Church which he purchased with his blood. Zealously watching the spiritual fold intrusted to them as vigilant watchmen, he warned them against all opinions and practices, however sanctioned by popular favour, which would deform by heresy, or rend by schism, the mystical body of their Redeemer.

The primitive order of the Church, in Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, they were to maintain. This was not to be considered a matter of indifference, or non-essential, but of the utmost importance; for it had con-

tinued without interruption fifteen centuries: nor is there in the history of Christianity a single Church which has remained one-third of that time under any other system of government, nor an example of any successful and permanent propagation of the Gospel without the superintendence of Bishops. The apostolic constitution of the Church requires not to be accommodated to times and circumstances, to the state of society, or the character of civil governments; for it is essentially spiritual, and capable of existing with effect under every possible form of civil policy. Its ministrations are suitable to all nations, and to all times; "for my kingdom," saith Jesus, "is not of this world;" and they are best calculated for perfecting the believer unto the measure of the stature of his divine Master.

The Bishop spoke of the beauty, unction, and effect of the liturgy with affectionate admiration, as the first of uninspired compositions; so correct and affecting in its exhibition of evangelical truth, and so well calculated to preserve the faith, that while it was in daily use, the Church could not fall away from the purity of the Gospel. The liturgy shows that the faith and practice of our Church is founded on the corruption of human nature, which leads to actual transgression; and by making our best works unworthy of divine acceptance, renders man guilty in the sight of God. It teaches that a deep and permanent conviction of this corruption and unworthiness humbles man before his Maker and his Judge, and disposes him cordially to embrace the doctrine of salvation through the grace and merits of a divine Redeemer. It teaches that we are saved from the guilt and dominion of sin by the favour and sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ, received in the exercise of faith and penitence, in union with his Church, in participating of the sacra-

ments and ordinances from the hands of his authorized ministry. These are the principles which distinguished the Church in her first and purest state; they are the principles taught and enforced in all the forms and usages of our holy communion, and they are the only principles which can restore purity and unity to the Christian family, now deformed and distracted by heresies and schisms. Bishop Hobart firmly believed that the Church was one, not as consisting of one compact society, but because the various societies or churches were modelled by the Apostles on the same principles, and ought ever to be so, namely, one Lord, one Spirit, one baptism; and that Bishops, Priests, and Deacons were the regular and appointed agents of the Church, to dispense the truths intrusted to its care, as contained in the New Testament, each according to his office. He could not recognise, as a true Church, any body of professing Christians who differed from him in their leading truths, and who had not among them a separate order, consisting of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, duly appointed to officiate in a course of ministerial duties. These duties or offices were designed by our Saviour to be perpetual; and it follows as a necessary inference, that it is a perpetual obligation in his followers to have a distinct order to succeed the first, for the purpose of discharging them. This obligation was universally acknowledged and acted upon by the Church, from the days of St. Paul, till the pride of Calvin, raising him in his own conceit above the Apostle, tempted him to question, and then to overturn it; but it is an obligation still felt and adhered to by the purest portion of the Christian family. Here we have the key of Bishop Hobart's conduct as a minister of the Christian Church; it is clear and simple, and easily accounts for that firm, uncom-

promising, and consistent course of proceeding which he pursued during his laborious life, through good report and bad report.

Acting on such principles, Bishop Hobart, as might have been expected, highly disapproved of different denominations uniting for religious purposes, and held in abhorrence all attempts to separate education from religion. He believed, and I think justly, that the popularity of these two principles, and the influence which their practice has had upon the civilized part of the world during the last forty years, has done more to produce indifference to religion, sap the foundations of Christianity, and multiply the ranks of infidelity, than all the irreligious publications which have, during the same period, issued from the press. He placed himself, from the first, in mild but firm opposition to the Bible Society. He considered such an institution, so far as his communion was concerned, totally unnecessary, because every good which it proposed might be much better and more conveniently accomplished by the orthodox Society already belonging to the Church; and should this Society deem it expedient to circulate a larger proportion of Bibles than had been hitherto done, it was fully in their power to increase their subscription for this express purpose. He deemed the Bible Society further objectionable, because, having the same object as the Bible and Prayer Book Society, it became, from the first, a sort of rival, absorbed funds, in as much as our people assisted, which in justice belonged to the latter. Such a general institution was further to be deprecated, as it could not, in any degree, be under the direction or control of Church people, who, mixed up with many denominations, would become a minority. It was therefore evident that the adversaries of the Church would pre-

serve their ascendancy, and prevent any salutary influence from being exerted on the part of our people, unless subservient to their views. When it was argued that much practical good flowed from the union in England, and that the same benefit would follow the establishment of the Bible Society in the United States, he questioned the fact, always with warmth, and sometimes with indignation. The countenance which was given to such a Society by many members of the Church of England, was, he said, very detrimental to their own establishment, and that far more good might have been effected through their own Church institution for Promoting Christian Knowledge: that it lifted the Dissenters to an equality with the Church, and enabled them to act in a compact body against her interests, to which they were always sufficiently inclined: that they made the distribution of the Bible an instrument of influence, for it was a notorious fact, that Church people were seldom or ever employed in this service. He declared that such associations were, from their very constitution, detrimental to the Church; and if we sincerely believe that her principles are more pure than those of any other, that she is the best suited to disseminate Gospel truth in its most spiritual and efficacious manner, in what way shall we réconcile it to our own consciences to associate, for religious purposes, with those who differ from us in many of what we believe to be the most essential articles of our holy faith?

When liberality of sentiment was pleaded, he repelled, with honest fervour, that sickly prostration of all principle, which regards man's solemn intercourse between earth and heaven any thing, or every thing, or nothing, and rests in perfect indifference to religious truth. To

be really liberal, is to judge kindly and candidly of the motives and sentiments of others, and never to allow difference of opinion to interfere with the charities of social life; but implies no want of principle in ourselves. In the examination of religion, it is our duty to come forward with a candid and docile temper of mind; but having ascertained the truth, and arrived at conclusions which we believe in conscience to be correct, it is then our duty to support and avow them with discreet but uncompromising firmness; and while we cherish the spirit of Christian charity towards those who differ from us, and are not strong in the faith, we must neither be indifferent to the cause of truth, nor to the increase of error, much less fall into that Laodicean neutrality, which is the death of every thing noble and generous in the mind. If, then, we are convinced that the Christian doctrines, as we believe them, are fully established in Scripture, and that they are taught by no other Church in equal purity, it becomes our duty, as it is our privilege, to maintain them with all our might. In such case, to treat them lightly, or attempt to explain them as unessential, instead of being the mark of a great and liberal spirit, is a proof of a wavering mind, not duly impressed with the value and importance of truth.

What would this intrepid defender of sound principle exclaim—Shall we trifle with the laws of God? Shall we assist other denominations in promoting error? Shall societies, established on the principle of indifference to religious truth, and proclaiming their own praises in the public journals with so much ostentatious pomp and parade as to disgust every humble mind, number us among their friends? Contrast, he might have added,

their public meetings, which seem to be held for no other purpose than that of bandying compliments and praises which shame would prevent them from uttering in a private room, with the modest simplicity of societies belonging to our Church, and which have for ages been productive of so much good; and then say if you can leave your own institutions and conscientiously join them. Nothing can be more loathsome to sober Christians than some of the reports of the Bible and other societies founded on the same latitudinarian principle, which are annually inflicted upon the public; they set principle, modesty, and good taste at defiance.

Bishop Hobart was accused by his enemies, as indeed all the opposers of the Bible Society have been—for many of its supporters are not sparing in their accusations—of wishing to deny the Bible to the people, and prevent its general dissemination. But this is false, and his accusers knew it to be so when they declared it, both in print and conversation. No man was ever more anxious than he was that the Scriptures should be found in every family—that their sound should go into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world; but he desired this to be done through the domestic society of the Church. Her members were in the first place to bring the tribute and help of their zeal and love, their united, best, and most strenuous efforts for the stability and enlargement of their own communion; and in the next to promote the welfare, efficacy, and advancement, as well temporal as spiritual, of all the designs with which it is connected. As to other denominations, let them have their own institutions, we seek not to tie their hands, or impugn their motives, or interfere with their labours. But how can an active and zealous supporter of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge be at

the same time an active and zealous supporter of the Bible Society?

Our distinctive principles, and the form of our church government, preclude its members, in my opinion, from joining promiscuously with other denominations for religious purposes; although many do so whose purity of intention I have no reason to question, whatever I may think of their judgment and consistency. With her ministers this duty is stronger, or rather to join such is altogether incompatible with their sacred office. What can be more inconsistent than to see Bishops belonging to the Church of England supporting societies whose objects are not under their influence? Episcopacy is a spiritual government by spiritual men, for spiritual purposes. One of its great objects is the union of the Church, by the prevention of heresies without, and schisms within; and I have therefore been always filled with the deepest sorrow, when I saw Bishops officers of Bible Societies. I deem such traitors to their own Church, and promoters of division. A Bishop at a Bible Society, is the object of hostility and hatred to the majority around him, who think it a matter of conscience to thwart his views, unless he forgets his vows and acts in accordance with their levelling designs. Bishop Hobart did not merely admit, but insisted on the importance of disseminating such religious tracts as exhibited views of divine truth in accordance with the sentiments of our Church, and explained her institutions; but in regard to Tract Societies he most judiciously observed, "that an union here with our Christian brethren who differ from us, must inevitably, to say the least, endanger our religious system, either by circulating sentiments in dissonance with its distinctive principles, or by keeping them out of view in a general association of commanding

influence, lead to the belief that they are of little importance."*

About the beginning of the present century, the Reverend Dr. Bell began to introduce a new system of education, which he brought from the East-Indies, and which offers great facilities for the rapid acquisition of elementary instruction. The Doctor's first pamphlet on the subject was printed in 1796, but several years elapsed before it attracted public attention. It is indeed questionable, notwithstanding its excellence, whether it would have come into general practice, had not Mr. Lancaster adopted it with some variations, and shown to the citizens of London the great ease and certainty with which its principles might be applied to the education of a numerous population. Unfortunately for mankind, this gentleman differed from Dr. Bell, in proceeding on the maxim of the Bible and Missionary Societies—a total indifference to religion. This alteration was immediately caught at by the falsely-called liberal, and having been much followed, it has engendered a spirit of indifference to Christianity, which these societies have cherished and extended so as to have produced a neglect of religion among the people altogether appalling. Bishop Hobart, a careful observer of the times, set his face against this baleful system of separating religion from education, as he had against promiscuous societies for religious purposes. His principle was, that to instill religious truths into the minds of children at the earliest period of life,

* The wisdom of the Bishop's views on the subject of different denominations uniting for religious purposes is now generally admitted. The discussions which have arisen in the Bible Society respecting the Apocrypha, the extraordinary preface to one of their foreign editions of the Bible, and the agents employed in distributing the Scriptures, have led to much acrimony and dissension, and taught many the propriety of withdrawing from general associations, and confining themselves to their own communion.

was to secure them against evil. In as far as the mechanical improvements were concerned, by which they might be more quickly and in greater numbers educated, no man was more eager to promote their adoption; but religion must ever be the basis of education. In their separation he foresaw the germ of every evil; and the present times prove his wisdom and sagacity. What do we see in Europe, as the consequence of knowledge without religion? The perversion of public principle, the daily weakening of the bonds of union between the humble ranks of society and their natural guardians and protectors, growing insubordination, disregard to the laws, increase of crime, the denunciation of good men, mockery of religion, impatience of just control and salutary restraint, contempt of sound learning and experience, and the interruption of honest industry. The Bishop, considering such evils to be the certain consequences of separating religion from education, boldly denounced every such attempt; he declared it to be contrary to the Christian profession, and that to patronize any such plan must prove destructive of that unity of spirit and bond of peace which were designed to be the distinguishing characteristics of Christ's Church upon earth, however liberal it might be called, or popular it might become. The Protestant reformers were better acquainted with human nature and the true sources of human happiness, and therefore raised the standard of education on the basis of Christianity. They declared, that to reject that basis, was to reject God; for what can be more wicked, than for men calling themselves Christians, to adopt a system which produces indifference to the Gospel, and the rejection of the doctrines which constitute its essence and foundation? If good principles are not inculcated, bad ones will gain admission into the minds

of the young ; and how can we expect any blessing upon ourselves or children, if we do not bring them acquainted with their Saviour and Creator ?

As usual, those who thought Mr. Lancaster deficient in the most material part of education, were stigmatized as the enemies of liberal sentiment ; but the friends of true religion are not to be deterred from doing their duty by obloquy and scorn. It is indeed to be deplored, that a plan of instruction so generally adopted in Europe and America, should not have ceded to Christianity the ground which it ought to occupy ; for it is impossible for the truly religious to sanction any system of instruction which scarcely admits the name of Christ, or such meagre extracts from the Bible as the children are not capable of understanding. Bring up the child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Experience proves, that to instruct children in the principles of the true faith by means of catechisms, easy at first, and as they grow up, more comprehensive and satisfactory, is certain to be successful. This has been the practice of the purest portions of the Christian Church in all ages ; and the same method, from its approved excellence, is now made use of to convey information on almost all the various branches of human knowledge. Children are easily made to comprehend the leading truths of revelation. That there are secret things that belong unto the Lord our God, in religion as well as in nature, we readily allow ; but in this point of view all are children, and although we cannot fathom, we feel their effects. Is there any great difficulty in making children understand the facts related in the Gospels, and upon which the doctrines of our religion stand ? Is it difficult for them to comprehend the practical precepts ? Those who say that it is impossible for

them to understand such things, are either very ignorant of the capacity of children, or destitute of the talent of communicating knowledge. At the same time, it is neither wise nor useful to perplex them with idle or subtle inquiries; the great anxiety should be, to make them embody in their lives, as far as possible, the instruction which they receive. A second step in the progress of dividing education from religion, has been made in the establishment of mechanic institutions, in which it is declared, that the demonstrative or experimental sciences only should be admitted. These may indeed strengthen the mind, and may be considered pillars in the temple of knowledge, but we must look elsewhere for elevation of soul, for taste, delicacy, pure virtue, and religion. It must be allowed, that the sight of several hundred artificers collecting, after their daily labours are over, to listen to the voice of science, is sufficiently imposing, and that it marks a momentous æra in the history of the British and American population; but we have already to record, that though very few years have elapsed since their commencement, many of these institutions have degenerated into political clubs and hot-beds of infidelity. It is not that such associations might not be made useful under judicious regulations, and produce excellent moral habits and a true regard for religion, while they become profitable resources for leisure, and for extending a knowledge of the sciences; but while they continue to be occupied almost exclusively with physical questions, and have nothing to do with the high principles of religion, there is nothing to unite the moral sympathies of their supporters, but much to produce discordant feelings. A short time ago, the gates of knowledge were scarcely open to any but the wealthy and high-born; now they are open to all; and so far the

change is worthy of all praise. By means of numerous popular institutions, thousands, who were left, in former times, in poverty and ignorance, are raised to a high state of intellectual being. It is therefore much to be lamented that this great moral experiment, which has already produced astonishing results, should limit itself to man as a physical being confined to this world, and thus neglect the more valuable part of his nature; and that, while the principles of mechanical science are becoming familiar to the multitude, the diffusion of religious knowledge among the same class is by no means so general. Nothing can be more beautiful than science and religion combined; they are, indeed, intimately entwined. God is to be worshipped in the works of nature, as well as in the works of grace: united, they raise man to the highest standard of excellence which it is possible for him to attain in this lower world; but, if they are to be separated, leave us religion to purify our hearts, and not science, which, without its companion, only enlarges our power of doing evil.

As the climax of this pernicious system, the London University was set up, and a similar institution projected at New-York. The world had never seen an institution, in the form of an university, pretending to give an encyclopædia of knowledge without any reference to theology; such a thing had never been imagined among Heathens or Mahometans, much less was it to be expected among professing Christians. If Christian theology be considered as a science which has materially influenced the literature, civilization, and destinies of nations, how could it with propriety be excluded from an establishment which professed to teach all the sciences? If it be necessary to acquire a knowledge of its elements, in order to comprehend upon what grounds, and through

what concurring circumstances, so large a portion of the civilized world has become Christianized, nothing could be more illiberal than its proscription; and if it be considered the rule of moral conduct to millions around us, whether right or wrong, can that system of instruction be complete, in which no mention is made of its principles and evidences? Even as a branch of history, entwining itself in all the transactions of the civilized world for the last nineteen centuries, a knowledge of Christianity becomes indispensable in any general plan of education.

The first best purpose of education, and which gives holiness and glory to every scheme for its improvement, is to connect thought and principle by the fullest demonstration of truth. This brings forth all that is religious in man; it makes him the true worshipper of God and the self-denying friend of his species. But are such sentiments and feelings nourished by physical science? Certainly not. We must unlock the treasures of moral science to find a mould for the noblest form of mind; and if the philosophy of the heart and spirit form an indispensable part of instruction, how is religion to be excluded? Religious principle is inherent in every man, nor can his mind be analyzed with correctness without introducing religion; and why not then introduce it in a proper manner; and not by imperfect, unconnected, and often sarcastic hints, unsettle the youthful mind on this, the most precious of all subjects. Does not every person feel that physical pleasures and mental amusements, when confined to this earthly sphere, are almost on a par; and yet, if, in the very midst of such pleasures and amusements, there are occasional intervals when the soul rejects, and even loaths them, is not this a proof that it has other wants? does not this dissatisfaction with earthly things, this longing after a more elevated

sphere, open the mind to the glorious truths of revelation? Is it possible that any reflecting being can be content with a life confined to this world—the weakness and inconveniences of infancy; the passions, the errors, the faults of youth; the ambitious miscalculations and indifference of manhood; the infirmities and degradation of childish old age? In truth, it is the religious principle inherent in every breast that ennoble the character, and gives the true charm to scientific knowledge. To what do the investigations of the works of nature tend, but to expand our conceptions of the power, wisdom, benevolence, and superintending providence of God? What are all the objects of knowledge but dark and comfortless, unless animated by vivid conceptions of him who made all things? True knowledge may be defined, a seeking after God; and while we are seeking him in his external works, shall we neglect his spiritual manifestations? Exterior nature bears, indeed, the stamp of infinite perfection, but only as a sensible medium to expand and exalt our conceptions of him whose invisible glories they represent; and it is not until they are purified by the light of divine revelation, that they open themselves to a future world, where our vision will be infinitely enlarged, the plans and operations of God more clearly unfolded, and where we shall be able to join the immortal hymn of the Church triumphant—"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

Bishop Hobart's voice was raised against this projected university; he saw the vast evils which such an institution was likely to produce, and he had the pleasure of knowing that the best and wisest men, both in England and America, were with him. Was then this excellent prelate an enemy to the dissemination of knowledge?

Far otherwise. No man more readily admitted that knowledge, in its original tendency, adds dignity and perfection to the human character; and that, in this point of view, it must ever be dear to Protestants, because from its diffusion they owe their emancipation from the Church of Rome, and the purity of their religious belief. It was not therefore his wish to limit, for a single moment, the noble gratification of scientific research, or to check, in any instance, legitimate inquiry; but he was anxious that all acquisitions should be made subservient to the one thing needful. United to religion, he saw no reason to confine information; and as the tendency of the public mind is evidently to advance in knowledge, he considered it the duty of the ministers of the Gospel to prepare themselves with such knowledge, scientific and moral, as well as religious, as should keep them in the van; so that they might be enabled to deliver their instructions with effect, and instead of discouraging, from an unworthy timidity, the advance of science, or deprecating its real advantages, it became them to point out its usefulness when subservient to spiritual things. Next, therefore, to religious truth, he considered moral and physical knowledge the most precious gift of Divine Providence, and urged their acquisition by precept and example. It is the duty of the clergy, he would say, to go before the general average in learning, and to be able to address themselves to the understandings as well as the hearts of an enlightened people. Moses was wise in all the knowledge of Egypt, and St. Paul was thoroughly instructed in the literature of his age, nor did he disdain to make use of it in the propagation of the Gospel. But Bishop Hobart desired what every true friend of man must desire, that our progress in science and our knowledge in religion should go hand in hand.

and that they should be most carefully united in all institutions for the instruction of youth.

In regard to missionary exertions, the same wise principles guided his proceedings. While anxious to spread the knowledge of the Gospel through the whole world, he felt it to be more especially his duty to promote missions of a domestic character. The greater portion of his diocese, when he became its Bishop, might be called a spiritual desert; on itinerant preachers or missionaries he therefore depended for collecting the scattered sheep, and he found that there was too much to be done at home to allow for a long time the means of sending the Gospel to distant climes. His first duty was to cultivate and water his own spiritual garden, by carrying the tidings of salvation to the new settlements, where individuals and families had gone from the regular ministration of the word* and sacraments, and where thousands were scattered as ignorant of Christianity as the pagan nations. Those wastes, he said, if not cultivated by the neighbouring Church, would for ever be neglected. The Church of Alexandria was not expected to send missionaries to convert the people in the neighbourhood of Carthage, nor the Church of Carthage to the neighbourhood of Alexandria; but each was bound, as from a centre, to extend its spiritual labours as far as possible around it. He considered the situation of the United States to be very different from that of England and other European nations. The latter, of known and limited extent, have been long blessed with ecclesiastical establishments, and are divided into small districts or parishes, in each of which a clergyman is placed to superintend the religious instruction of the people; and being thus well provided at home, they can look abroad with propriety and effect. But in the former, matters

are very different; there is no ecclesiastical establishment, the limits of civilization are continually extending, and the utmost exertions of the different denominations are not sufficient to carry spiritual food to the numerous destitute settlements which are daily growing up in all directions. Remote climes will be attended to, he frequently said, by our Protestant brethren in Europe; but we shall have more to do, for ages to come, than we are able to perform. Our own population, spreading through this vast continent, presents fields of spiritual destitution which powerfully appeal to our hearts and understandings. Let us first obey the Apostle, in providing for the household of faith: that accomplished, we may then contribute towards the more general extension of Gospel truth. Yet on this subject he was willing to meet his brethren in the candid spirit of concession, for there was no principle to give up, and no pernicious system to combat; and therefore he became a zealous supporter of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, the constitution of which admits the contributions or efforts of its members to be given to either, or to both. For although the Bishop considered the wants of the Church, in almost every district of the Union, great and urgent, yet he was too well acquainted with human nature not to know that the hearts of many would be opened, and their exertions increased, at the prospect of sending the Gospel to distant lands. He knew that no reasoning could be more fallacious than to infer that every thing paid to the one was an abstraction from the other; for those who, after due consideration, were convinced that the home mission was more in the way of their duty, might still feel that this formed no sufficient excuse for doing nothing for foreign missions. Others again, carried away by the splendid thought of conveying

the Gospel to the four corners of the earth, enlarged their contributions to both: it was a holy flame, which he sought in gentleness to direct, and was too noble to repress, or to treat with any thing but respect, even in its aberrations: for as we are bound to promote the cause of religion beyond the sphere in which we move, either as individuals, families, or congregations; so the Church to which we belong may with propriety look to other lands and nations, when able to help them. But though kind and considerate in this matter towards those who differed from him, he was firm in opposing all contributions from his people, except for the extension of Christianity as professed by our own Church; nor would he join with other denominations in propagating the Gospel, either at home or abroad. He was truly solicitous to enlarge the boundaries of our Lord's vineyard, and without respect of persons would lead to the marriage feast as many as would come in, but they must come by the door. It is not given to us to commute faith for works, or works for faith. We cannot allow that he who denies the divinity of Christ, and he who acknowledges him to be his Lord and his God, stand upon the same, or equal ground. We cannot, instead of one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, acknowledge many bodies, many discordant spirits, many different objects of worship, many conflicting articles of faith, many baptisms, or modes of admission into the Christian covenant; for this would be to annul the Christian charter. As well might we affirm that there are gods many and lords many, of opposite wills and purposes, as that "one God and Father of all" should be the Author of such confusion. All such unhallowed junctions, therefore, as tend to neutralize sound principle and to destroy the Christian character, ought to be discountenanced and condemned.

The best commentary on the Bishop's opinions and principles was found in the success with which they were attended in conveying the bread of life through his vast diocese, in which he was continually employed in forming new congregations, and planning missionary expeditions through the new states which were daily added to the Union: these fields of Christian labour were ever on his lips—the vast regions watered by the Missouri, Mississippi, St. Lawrence, and the great lakes, already teeming with an active population, without any means of instruction in Gospel truth, or in the practice of its duties; the still vaster tracts even beyond these, which are settling with a rapidity unexampled in the history of the world; to these we must add the original inhabitants, who have the strongest claims on the justice and sympathy of the sincere believer, and to whom the blessings of Christianity and civilization ought to be extended; it is a debt of conscience, which cannot be discharged but by the most persevering and strenuous exertions.

The strength of his body was not equal to the energies of his mind, and began to give way under his various, extensive, and incessant labours. A sea voyage was therefore deemed necessary; and he sailed from New-York, in September, 1823, accompanied by the most affectionate regrets and fervent prayers of his people for his happy return with a renovated constitution. During his absence, which continued about two years, he visited France, Switzerland, and Italy; but his principal stay was in Great-Britain and Ireland, the greater part of which interesting countries he actually traversed. The kind reception he met with in London, and in all parts of the three kingdoms, was highly gratifying. He had brought himself into more general notice than the visit of a mere individual, however respectable, by the publi-

cation of two volumes of sermons on the most important doctrines of revelation. Jealous of the honour of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, and hearing it accused of having departed from the faith, and that he was ranked by name among those who were thus represented as neglecting the great essentials of religion, and insisting chiefly on its mere externals, he thought that the best refutation of such a charge, both as respected himself and his brethren, would be to place before the British public, a series of such discourses as he had been in the habit of delivering, in the ordinary course of his ministry, to his own congregation. "He felt it his duty," he says, in his short and animated preface, "being thus publicly and particularly implicated, to vindicate himself from one of the most serious imputations which can be urged against a Christian minister. And to this course he was also prompted by an earnest desire, that, as a Bishop of the American Episcopal Church, he should not appear to have departed from the doctrines of the venerable Church of England, to which that Church is indebted, under God, for her first foundation, and for a long continuance of nursing care and protection." Many circumstances combined to render this work deeply interesting to the friends of the Church of England. It proved that their American brethren maintained the same doctrines, and in the same purity with themselves. Nor was it a small consolation to find them so ably and triumphantly vindicated by a Prelate who lived in a distant country, where no temptations of an interested nature existed, and who could be only influenced by a sincere conviction of their truth. They rejoiced to behold their apostolic Church, in its forms, language, liturgy, articles, and homilies, taking deep root in the vast continent of America, where

hundreds of millions of human beings might in time exist, and extending its prolific branches on every side. In the Bishop's sermons they find the being of God the Creator, Jesus Christ the Propitiation, the Holy Spirit the Sanctifier, the guilt of the sinner, the need of repentance, the nature of holiness, the comforts of religion, the hopes of the righteous, the glories of the redeemed, and the eternity of blessedness, unfolded with a master hand.

1825

On the first of September, he embarked, at Liverpool, for the United States, and landed at New-York, with renovated health and spirits, on the twelfth of October, where he was received with affectionate enthusiasm by his own people, and the kind greetings of all denominations. Soon after his arrival, he gave free vent to his feelings of love and affection for his friends, his parishioners, and his native land, in a discourse from the pulpit, which being afterwards published, attracted no small degree of notice in England as well as in the United States. So far as it can be deemed the outpouring of a warm and affectionate heart glowing with love and esteem for his native country and the friends who had manifested so great kindness to him, it is worthy of all praise; nor can we withhold our approbation, in so far as it was intended to proclaim his unaltered attachment to his own Church and institutions, and to rouse and give force to the same feeling among her members; neither are we disposed to blame the great anxiety manifested throughout the whole discourse to give popularity to his Church, which he thought had been checked by the Episcopal character connecting it, in appearance, more with the civil government of England than that of the United States. To be attached to our own country, which contains those we hold most dear, our purest and most early associations, and to impart this lovely and affectionate preference to

those around us, when speaking of other countries which we may have visited, is highly commendable. I honour most cordially that devotedness to his own native land which makes a man cherish and love it above all other lands. But the Bishop, as his best friends confessed, went too far. Not satisfied with a general expression of his preference, he entered into detail; and here he failed. His opportunities of observation in England, though far better than those of most other travellers, owing to the marked attention paid him, yet were not sufficient to enable him, acute as he was, to get to the bottom of all points upon which he speaks and decides with the utmost confidence; and he seemed to have forgotten, that, notwithstanding the zeal and unusual measure of talent for which he was distinguished, his Church could not have flourished and increased as it has done, but through the aid derived from the support given to it by our monarchs, while it was part of the establishment of the empire.

I dined alone with Bishop Hobart, on my way to England, in March, 1826, and the conversation turned on the sermon, which had not been long published. I expressed my regret that it had ever seen the light, for it was the only one of all his works I could not approve of: that, believing it calculated to do no little mischief to the Church of England, it was my intention to review it, on my arrival in London, with all friendliness, but with perfect freedom. The conversation was long and animated; we examined the sermon minutely, and discussed, without reserve, those parts in which we differed. With his usual candour he confessed that, in some matters, his opinion was rather hasty, and in a playful manner requested me to give him a specimen of my proposed critique. To this I readily agreed, proposing to confine myself to his sweeping denunciation against ecclesiastical

establishments. I shall commence, I said, with expressing my deep sorrow that the enemies of such excellent institutions would have the gratification of finding a person of his great talents and authority among their number: that I could easily perceive why opposite and discordant sects, who agree in nothing else, unite against ecclesiastical establishments; nor was I surprised that infidels should declare against them, as the strong hold of that Christianity which they hate; or Unitarians, who detest them for the purity of their creeds; or the speculatist, who is ready to sacrifice the best interests of his country for the sake of his favourite theory; or the reformer, who sees abuse in every thing, and is only at ease amidst changes and revolution; but for a sincere and learned Christian to believe that genuine religion will be most effectually extended by destroying the reservoir from whence its streams have issued, and by laying the axe to the root of the tree which has hitherto produced the fruits of righteousness, appeared to me truly astonishing. I was, indeed, prepared to admit that it was extremely difficult for a person, born and brought up in this country, (the United States,) to appreciate the vast benefits of an established Church, with its parochial ministers regularly distributed through the whole country in settled residences, and with a given space in which to labour for the temporal and eternal happiness of the population; he must divest himself of many prejudices and unfortunate associations before he could approach the subject with any hope of giving it impartial consideration; the defects, highly coloured and exaggerated, of such institutions are ever present to his mind, without being aware that they are not inherent, but of easy remedy, while the advantages seem obscure, or are totally unknown. In states possessed of an ecclesiastical

establishment, the country is divided into small portions, and a religious teacher placed in each, by which means all the people have access to religious instruction. A reverence is thus kept up in their minds for what is pure and holy; and their number being small, and living as it were together, the clergyman soon becomes acquainted with every individual, both old and young, and is able to visit them occasionally at their own houses; he becomes their friend and adviser, the composer of differences, the promoter of peace and contentment, the catechiser of children, the encourager of industry, sobriety, and all the virtues that make man prosperous and happy here and hereafter.

As the comparison is between England and the United States, I shall confine myself to these two countries; but in showing the necessity of the ecclesiastical establishment of England for the religious instruction of the nation, I seek not to vindicate abuses, for such may be removed, and leave the establishment more efficient than ever. The Church of England is commensurate with the natural boundaries of the country, which consists of about 55,000 square miles, containing fourteen millions of inhabitants, and divided into about 11,000 parishes. The number of clergymen actually employed in parochial duties are not fewer than 16,000. The parishes may be reckoned to contain five square miles each, a space not by any means too great for all the residents to attend regularly the service of the Church; and the average population not quite 900 souls, or about 200 families for each clergyman—a number not greater than, if vigilant, he is able to instruct. Even this average number is lessened, in towns, by those who dissent from the established form of worship; but this is the general state of the rural parishes, for the Dissenters hardly ever go to

the distant and obscure corners of any country, such they leave to the establishment, while they plant their standards amidst towns and populous villages, where, in as far as religious instruction is concerned, they are very little wanted. Now it is evident that the moral effect of such a body of men daily mixing with their people must be very great, more especially as they are quite independent of them for subsistence. Let us now look at the Episcopal Church of the United States, and see what moral effect it can have on the population, as a source of Christian instruction; for this, after all, is the true foundation upon which to institute a comparison between it and the Church of England; and if in this it greatly fail, the comparison falls to the ground. Now I shall give you every advantage in this matter, and instead of taking the United States generally, by which my argument in favour of England and ecclesiastical establishments would be much strengthened, I shall confine myself to the state of New-York, where the Episcopal clergymen are more numerous, in proportion to the population, than in any other state, and superintended undoubtedly by the most active Bishop.

In this large state the clergy of the Episcopal Church are in number 136; the population two millions, or upwards of 14,000 souls to each; the square miles about 46,000. Hence the parishes, if we may so denominate them, contain 338 square miles, and are rather equal to an English county than an English parish. The influence of the two Churches, as confined to England and New-York, is as one to seventy; and if the comparison be taken with all the states, it becomes much more favourable to England. Such influence on the manners and habits of the people is next to nothing, and yet you extol your Church above that of England, and exclaim

against establishments! Add to this, the dependence of your clergy upon the people for support—a state of things which is attended with most pernicious consequences. The congregations frequently take offence at their pastors without a good reason, and in such cases the latter derive no protection from the Bishops, who are equally helpless with themselves. There are doubtless many splendid exceptions, but, in general, the clergy, of all denominations in the United States, are miserably dependent upon their congregations. The result is, that they too frequently sink below the rank which they ought to hold in society; and whatever be their personal merit, they fail to command that respect from a vain, and thoughtless, and undiscerning people, which is necessary to secure attention to their instructions. It is not unusual to hire clergymen by the year, or even half year; and such things excite no particular attention. It may be, that, accustomed from their childhood to temporary engagements, the clergy partake of that restless disposition and desire of change so common in new countries, and think little of going with their families from state to state, in search of a new settlement. It cannot be supposed that clergymen so situated, will at all times speak with that fearless disregard of consequences which the proper discharge of their duty may often require. The difference, then, of the two Churches is this, that while in England the country is partitioned into parishes, over which a spiritual head is appointed, to be the moral and religious instructor of its population, and to add new converts to the faith by familiar and daily ministrations from house to house; the Church in the United States presents only a few verdant spots bearing marks of recent cultivation, distinguished chiefly by their contrast with the barrenness of the surrounding waste. It is the

duty of Christian nations to constitute, within their boundaries, ecclesiastical establishments; and since the general consent of all nations has been admitted as an argument in favour of the Divine Existence, so the public profession of religion by every people, proves that it is a primary law of human nature to honour and worship the gods: how much more then is it the duty of every state where the Gospel has been embraced, to recognise the religion of Jesus Christ, and to make provision that his ordinances be honoured and maintained! A family or nation owes its existence to God as much as an individual, and is as much the subject of his moral law; but, the moment that any family or state believes the Bible, they are bound by the light of nature and the moral law to profess the religion which it enjoins. Nor is it enough for every member of the family to profess his faith in Christ—there must be family profession and family worship. Again, in a nation believing the Gospel, there must be national profession and national worship. The nation that establishes Paganism, is a pagan nation; that which recognises Popery, is a popish nation; but the nation which recognises no religion, is an atheistical nation. It were easy to show that Scripture is clear and explicit on these points, and that the Church, though erected for a spiritual purpose, exists in the world as an external, visible society: it ought to be chartered by the legislature, as an expression of homage to the Son of God; not that this should interfere with the peculiar tenets and modes of worship of those who dissent from the national religion, provided there is nothing in them hurtful to the general interests of society, or dangerous to the lawful institutions of the country. Nor is this all. It is the duty of the legislature to make for the Church thus chartered, that temporal provision which it requires,

and which those of the state may admit. For it is as incumbent upon nations as upon individuals to honour the Lord with their substance; and it is predicted, that the kings of the earth shall not only fall down before the King of Zion, but shall bring forward and offer gifts. What, it will be said, is the legislature to be the judge of what is a pure, and what is a corrupt profession of Christianity? I say, Yes. The legislature is not to dictate to the people in matters of faith, but, in making a national profession of religion, they must judge which profession is agreeable to the word of God, and consequently conducive to the welfare of the nation. The truth lies as open to them as to other men, and is to be ascertained in the same manner. It is also to be remembered, that the proper object of such laws is not the doctrines and ordinances of Christianity, but the external profession and observance of them, as requiring defence and maintenance: but, in doing so, they do not dictate to people's consciences, nor impose this religion upon any one; they merely give it legal countenance and support; and this much every Christian nation is bound in duty to do.

But, notwithstanding all this, I admit that the progress of the Episcopal Protestant Church in the United States has been wonderful, and that she carries with her the divine blessing; and believing, as I do, that she will not only far outstrip all other denominations, but that the communion of which she is a part, is destined to evangelize the whole world, I should have rejoiced in concurring entirely in the animated praises you pronounce upon her, had you not condemned ecclesiastical establishments, and placed her in her infancy above the mother Church. In this you greatly err; and when you picture to your fancy England studded with parish churches, regularly

served in all the beauty of holiness, and turn to this country, with a church at vast intervals, and a clergy not sufficient to supply the wants of one-twentieth of the population, you must feel the advantages of an ecclesiastical establishment. In England, you behold the genius of true religion entering into every family; but here, unless in some favoured spots, you behold the spirit of false religion, infidelity, error, and superstition traversing the length and breadth of the land, and withering with its pestilential breath, public as well as domestic and personal happiness and virtue. Come, said the Bishop, you are becoming too severe. On this the door opened, and a man from the Catskill Mountains was introduced, who told the Bishop that their missionary's time had almost expired, and that, being few in number, they could not engage him for six months longer, unless some aid could be granted them from the missionary fund. The good Bishop promised the necessary assistance; and on his departure, said, with a smile, How unlucky, that my country friend should come, in the midst of this discussion, to show the nakedness of the land! He confessed that I had placed ecclesiastical establishments in a point of view which was in some measure new to him; but, made up as the United States are of all possible denominations, there was not the smallest probability that any one would be ever recognised by the government; and he was pleased to conclude the conversation with observing, that he could not fall into more friendly hands, and that, whatever his opinion might be on ecclesiastical establishments, he loved with all his soul the Church of England.

On reaching London, I found that the Bishop's sermon had made no small noise among the clergy; some were offended, and all regretted that a person whom they had

cherished and esteemed, should have gone so far out of his way to attack the Church, of which he had so frequently testified his admiration. Nor could they account for his dedicating such a sermon to Joshua Watson, Esq. a gentleman particularly distinguished as an affectionate member of the united Church of England and Ireland, and whose life had ever been devoted to the advancements of her best interests. As the treasurer of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, as an active member of the Commission for Building Churches, and a firm but mild supporter of all her institutions, his services had been invaluable, and always gratuitously given. It could not therefore be pleasant for one of his feelings and sentiments to be thus brought before the public as the friend and patron of a most uncompromising censurer of the Church he loved. In most points, indeed, counter-statements might have been easily made, and in some, the tables effectually turned; but Mr. Watson's kind and amiable disposition is not formed for controversy.

The feeling of regret, perhaps of offence, was at first somewhat aggravated among the friends of the Church, because they had considered Bishop Hobart one of themselves, and because his opinions were eagerly caught at and exultingly brought forward by the Laodiceans of the establishment. But all bitterness soon passed away, and if something of disappointment and mortification lingered for a season, they are long since neutralized and subdued into something like that which is contained in the following extract from a letter of one of the Bishop's most able and candid correspondents—"I admire the sermon, as an excellent stroke of policy; you could not more effectually have conveyed the sensation to your whole diocese, and indeed throughout the states, that the twenty-horse power, whose energies had been for two years suspended,

was at work again, and I have no doubt have called the attention of your whole communion to yourself with all the enthusiasm of popularity. I have little doubt also that your sermon will conciliate esteem and awaken consideration among aliens, and that Episcopacy will become more in favour; and nothing will rejoice me more than such an effect.* That the sermon did much towards producing those happy results, and removing many prejudices which had been entertained in the United States against the Church, will be readily granted; and to produce good, and not evil, was undoubtedly the Bishop's intention in its publication; it was the signal of his return with renovated powers, to labour for the good of his beloved diocese, and the whole Episcopal communion. Soon was his presence manifest, in the life and energy which he communicated to his clergy; he seemed, as it were, to multiply himself, and to rejoice in the increase of his duties; as if he wished, by redoubled activity and exertion, to make up for his long absence. It is not easy to communicate to a clergyman of an established Church the variety and extent of his labours. His care of his large parish, his attention to the numerous societies and institutions of the Church, his vast correspondence, and incessant calls for sermons and addresses on public occasions, were far more than sufficient to overwhelm the strongest mind; and yet the greatest labour remains to be mentioned, namely, his annual progress through his diocese, in every part of which congregations have been formed, or are forming. Many are the places where our Church is now unknown, said the Bishop, in his last ad-

* I mentioned to some friends in London, my wish to review the Bishop's sermon, but was informed that an article on the subject had already been prepared. It appeared in the British Critic, but was too much in the spirit of retaliation to be useful. The writer knew little or nothing of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and was dry, querulous, and unsatisfactory. Having no desire to prolong the controversy, and loving Bishop Hobart notwithstanding, I let the matter drop.

dress to the annual convention of his clergy in 1829, but where it would be established, if missionaries could be procured. The want of clergymen seriously retards the progress of the Church. During the visitation which he had just finished, and of which, according to the canons, he was giving an account to his assembled clergy, he had confirmed 1299 persons in forty or fifty different places, at all of which he preached; he had held twelve ordinations and consecrated eight churches; and in discharging these important duties, and visiting the different congregations and growing settlements, he had passed through the greater part of his vast diocese, and travelled nearly 4000 miles. Similar journies and labours were made every year, and his return to New-York was a return, not to ease, but to increase of labour. On this occasion he made three visits to the Oneida Indians, a tribe of the aborigines, which still continue within the state of New-York, and which had been at former times the object of his earnest solicitude. The incidents will interest you. "On the 21st July, I visited the congregation of the Indians on the Oneida Reservation, and was inexpressibly gratified with the evidence afforded, by many of them, of piety and Christian zeal. Their judicious and faithful catechist and instructor, Mr. Solomon Davis, presented ninety-seven for confirmation, whom he had previously instructed and prepared for this holy rite. On my first visit, a number of years before, I had confirmed nearly the same number, and at subsequent visits others were confirmed. It could not but excite the most gratifying emotions to find them still advancing in Christian knowledge, and in attachment to our Church, in whose liturgy they joined with affecting simplicity and devotion. On the 30th, I again visited the Oneidas, to attend their chief in a council to request my advice as to some particulars in relation to their spiritual interests."

The scene was to me novel and highly interesting. An ancient butternut grove, from time immemorial their council-ground, was the place where their chiefs and warriors assembled and arranged themselves in circles, within which the clergy and myself were seated. Groups of young men, and women, and children were scattered round the assemblage, regarding, with evident attention and interest, what was said and done. The address to me of one of the chiefs, the speech of another to the natives, and the final address of the orator, were marked by great good sense, and by simple and commanding eloquence. On the 14th of September I again visited the church of Oneida, and admitted the Rev. Solomon Davis, and the Rev. Jos. B. Young, deacons, to the order of priests. On this occasion, a pertinent and affecting address, drawn up, at the request of the chiefs, by a young Indian who had received a good English education, was read to me in their name, in which they requested me to recognise Mr. Davis as their permanent pastor. This was done in a simple, significant ceremony suggested by them: the chiefs standing behind each other, each placed his hands on the shoulders of the one before him, and the first on the shoulders of Mr. Davis, whom I held by the right hand while I replied to their address. By this ceremony they wished to signify that a strong band of union was formed between them, their pastor, and their Bishop."

The period of this zealous prelate's earthly labours was fast drawing to a close; and although he lived to commence another visitation, and had even made some progress through his diocese, he was not permitted to bring it to an end; but was removed, when in the midst of his journey, and at a great distance from home, to a better world than this, at the comparatively early age of fifty-five. For nearly five years after his return from

Europe he had been spared as a shining light to his clergy and people, and every year increased their affection and raised him in their estimation.

I dare not dwell on his last illness and his happy and edifying death, for they have been described with an affectionate eloquence which few can hope to equal. The narrative of his closing days, and the sermons preached on his death, which have been collected and published, are well deserving of your perusal. Honourable as they are to the hearts and heads of the writers, the talents they display reflect the greatest credit on the clergy of the American Episcopal Church, and show that the lamented prelate's mantle rests on many of his brethren. The grief and sympathy excited by his death, through all parts of the Union, were only exceeded by that manifested upon the death of Washington. He appeared rather the property of the nation than the head of a single denomination of Christians. Never was there such a funeral in New-York: the magistrates, the clergy of all denominations in the city, and many from other dioceses and remote parts of the country, rich and poor, young and old, hastened to follow to the grave the remains of this distinguished and beloved servant of God—it was the funeral of Jacob.

Within three short weeks after the death of Bishop Hobart, I passed through the village of Auburn, and remaining over Sunday, preached in the church where the lamented prelate had delivered his last sermon. I had thus the benefit of becoming acquainted with the friend of his youth, the amiable and excellent Dr. Rudd, who ministered so kindly, affectionately, and unweariedly to the comforts of his last moments. Our conversation naturally turned on the recent loss which the Church had sustained, and the Doctor mentioned several interesting traits of his illustrious friend, with so much good

sense, sweetness, and piety, as left on my mind a very favourable opinion of his character and attainments; and I cannot but augur favourably of a Church that can spare a pastor of his great experience and ability for one of its more remote villages.

It is pleasing to reflect on the great exertions which the Protestant Episcopal Church has been for some time making to disseminate Christian knowledge, and the blessing with which they have been attended. The prospects before her are encouraging and glorious; she extends her arms to the east and to the west, offering salvation to all nations; she calls upon her sons and daughters to hold fast their profession, and upon the heathen among whom they live, to save their souls alive. With her missionary Bishops superintending and directing, in unity and love, the labours of her clergy, and carrying in their hands the Bible and a scriptural liturgy, she proceeds with advantages which no other Christian denomination ever possessed. But, brilliant as this picture is, we find it sprinkled with spots of darkness. *The first Bishop of Quebec, the four first Bishops of Calcutta, and now the Bishop of New-York, (for he too was a missionary Bishop, as well as those of Quebec, Calcutta, and Nova-Scotia,) have been called, by the

* It ought to be remembered, that the late Dr. Mountain, Lord Bishop of Quebec, was not only the first Bishop of the see, but the first missionary Bishop ever sent out from the Church of England. I have attempted, in a sermon some time before the public, to do some justice to the character of this eminent prelate, who, for thirty-five years, governed the Church in the Canadas, and "laid a fair foundation for the diffusion of Christianity through that extensive country, according to the apostolic principles of the Church of England, which, arrayed in her beautiful garments, is turning darkness into light, and sowing those seeds of righteousness and truth which shall spring up and bloom for ever."

Of living prelates I may not speak, or I might say much of the vigilance and labours of his pious and primitive successor in the see of Quebec, as well as those of the eloquent, and faithful, and uncompromising Bishop of Nova-Scotia, who lately travelled ten thousand miles by sea and land, visiting his extensive diocese.

decree of a mysterious Providence, to give an account of their stewardship. To them all, for they were worthy, it will be the duty of future historians of the Church to do justice; but the many points of resemblance which I perceive, or think I perceive, between the two first prelates of the East and the subject of this letter, place them in the same tablet, and will hand them down together, for the edification and instruction of the people, and the imitation of church rulers, to the latest generations. I do not presume to say that the resemblance is complete; for each was better fitted for his own particular station, as to place and time, than any of the other two would have been, and yet they were equally meritorious.

To all three belonged an activity and cheerfulness of spirit which no disappointments or annoyances could embitter or depress. Never did any Christian Bishops leave more solid proofs of unwearied goodness, or of more ardent keenness to discharge the duties of their sacred office. Their zeal had nothing of ostentation, nor their devotedness of weakness; nor did they consider any sacrifice too great, in promoting the glory of God and the salvation of men. To an attractive simplicity of heart, and pathetic but commanding eloquence, they added enlarged wisdom, sagacious discernment, manly energy, tempered by mildness, and an uncompromising firmness in supporting sound principles, and condemning expediency, in matters of religion. With the most winning kindness they took part in the laborious duties of their brethren the clergy; and encouraging them, by word and deed, to proceed in the most arduous of their undertakings with an assured hope of final success, they never failed of increasing their zeal and raising every latent faculty into action. To look at them, so humble in their deportment, though so highly gifted; so venerable, and yet so condescending; so primitive and apostolic.

- though adorned with all learning; inviting friendship by their amiable manners, and conciliating all hearts by their generous frankness—is one of the most delightful spectacles that this world has to exhibit. Noble is the example which their lives present of unqualified self-devotion and unreserved dedication of themselves to the holy cause which they had undertaken, of deliberate and voluntary rejection of ease and comfort, and of fixedness of purpose to spend and be spent in propagating the Gospel. In this single object all their powers and resources, uncommonly endowed as they were by nature and education, were entirely concentrated. Nor is their example lost; it lives in the hearts of thousands, and will, from age to age, be renewed in ministers of Christ crucified, till time shall be no more. Though removed at an early age, (Bishop Hobart, the eldest, being scarcely fifty-five,) they have left an imperishable name; nor in their deaths were they divided; for while glorifying God on earth, they were summoned to glorify him in heaven.

But I must conclude. Never were the happy results of perseverance, on steady principle and singleness of purpose, more conspicuous than those produced by these venerable Fathers in the Lord; they are glorious monuments of what may be accomplished by men who seek not their own, but the things of God, and who regard not as matters of indifference the doctrines and discipline of the primitive Church, or admit the mere profession of orthodox opinions, to shelter a cold, heartless, and careless disposition; but who, like these holy prelates, display on their banner, in the spirit of true faith working through love—"The advancement of the kingdom of Christ throughout the world, by evangelical truth and apostolic order." I remain, &c. &c. &c.

JOHN STRACHAN.

York, Upper-Canada, 8th May, 1832.

o by
s by
ntful
the
self-
o the
and
ness
the
d re-
ature
their
and
Christ
ed at
rcely
or in
g God
aven.
results
ess of
these
monu-
o seek
rd not
line of
ion of
l care-
display
hrough
Christ
oostolic
CHAN.